



STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. BOX 83720
BOISE, IDAHO 83720-0027

TOM LUNA
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

December 11, 2008

TO: Superintendents, Principals, Business Managers, Charter School Administrators, Title I Directors, Special Education Directors, Testing Coordinators, Technology Coordinators and Public Information Officers

FROM: Tom Luna, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: Weekly E-Newsletter

IN THIS REPORT:

- **Science ISAT graduation requirement extended to Class of 2013**
- **School Improvement Update**
- **Superintendent's Schedule**
- **What's New**
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SCIENCE ISAT GRADUATION REQUIREMENT EXTENDED TO CLASS OF 2013 (GO TO TOP)

The Idaho State Board of Education unanimously voted to make proficiency on the science portion of the ISAT a graduation requirement for the Class of 2013 (freshman entering in Fall 2009). Previously, the Class of 2012 would have been required to pass this portion of the ISAT to graduate. Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna supported this change to the graduation requirement.

Now, the science portion of the ISAT will become a graduation requirement the same year as other increased high school graduation requirements go into effect. Please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/hs_grad_requirements.htm to learn more about the new high school graduation requirements.

To learn more about the State Board of Education meeting, please visit www.boardofed.idaho.gov.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT UPDATE (GO TO TOP)

Here is an update on upcoming School Improvement events and deadlines:

REMINDER: School Improvement Plans Due December 15:

Assurance pages for those required to submit School Improvement plans this year are due to the School Improvement office by 5 p.m. on Monday, December 15. Please contact Lisa Kinnaman or Katherine Weatherspoon at (208) 426-4852 with any questions regarding School Improvement plans.

School Improvement Webinar on December 18:



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The Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools Webinar scheduled for December 18, 2008 will focus on the Characteristic of High Levels of Collaboration and Communication. This presentation will include information on powerful procedures to be used by individuals and collaboration teams in dealing with issues of content and process. Information and strategies presented can be applied to any kind of collaboration situation, including but not limited to the work of data, intervention, grade level, professional development and content area teams. Rosie Santana and Steve Underwood will present the Webinar at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. MST. The same presentation will be delivered at both times, as this material is appropriate for Elementary and Secondary educators. The estimated time frame for the Webinar is 1 hour. You can register at http://idla.blackboard.com/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_id= 203_1. Select the "Idaho Live" tab, and click "Register for Webinar."

Credit Available for School Improvement Webinars:

Credit is available from Boise State University for participation in the School Improvement Webinar series. Those applying for credit will be expected to spend at least two hours after each webinar working on implementing and completing an assignment worksheet. One credit is offered for every five webinars attended. To receive more information or an application for credit, e-mail your name and contact information to katherineweatherspoon@boisestate.edu.

Date Change for January School Improvement Webinar:

Please note that the date of the January School Improvement Webinar has been changed to January 28 at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. MST. Please contact Lisa Kinnaman or Katherine Weatherspoon at (208) 426-4852 with any questions regarding School Improvement Webinars.

SUPERINTENDENT'S SCHEDULE (GO TO TOP)

- Superintendent Luna will attend the State Board of Land Commissioners meeting from 9 a.m. to noon on Tuesday, December 16 in Boise.
- Superintendent Luna will speak at the Boise Young Professionals Lounging Series from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Tuesday, December 16 in Boise.
- Superintendent Luna will attend the Governor's Capitol for a Day on Wednesday, December 17 in Rathdrum.

WHAT'S NEW (GO TO TOP)

- **Apply now for the National Youth Science Camp** -- Applications to attend the 2009 National Youth Science Camp are now available online at www.nysc.org/2009. The NYSC is hosted and operated by the National Youth Science Foundation. Two graduating high school students will be selected to represent Idaho at the all-expenses-paid honors program, which will be held from July 1-25, 2009. Mail or ship your completed application directly to Scott Smith, Science Coordinator at the State Department of Education, so that it is received no later than **January 23, 2009**. Do not send your application material directly to the National Youth Science Foundation. For questions



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about the application process, please contact Scott Smith, Science Coordinator, at (208) 332-6952 or SSmmith@sde.idaho.gov. For more information about the NYSC, please visit www.nysc.org.

- **Nominate a teacher for the GIANTS Award** -- Now is the time to nominate a teacher for the 9th annual GIANTS (Governor's Industry Award for Notable Teaching in Science) Award. The award recognizes teachers who integrate real life applications of science and technology in their classrooms. One teacher each from an Idaho elementary, middle and high school will be selected to receive the award, which includes a \$2,000 cash prize and will be presented by the Governor early in the spring of 2009. The school that nominates the winning teacher or group of teachers will receive a cash stipend of \$500 to enhance and enrich science education. Visit www.sde.idaho.gov/site/science/giants.htm to learn more about the nomination process for elementary and secondary teachers. Nominations must be postmarked no later than **February 16, 2009**. For more information, contact Scott Smith, the Department's Science Coordinator, at (208) 332-6952 or SSmith@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Abraham Lincoln Essay Contest** -- To celebrate the 200th birthday of our Sixteenth President, the Idaho Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission has announced the Abraham Lincoln Essay Competition for high school students (grades 9-12). The objectives of the competition are to encourage today's youth to evaluate Abraham Lincoln's contributions to American history, foster an awareness of the role that he played as president of the United States, and to make connections to similar events in today's world. We hope that schools will encourage students to participate and guide their participation by helping them to interpret the writing topic: Abraham Lincoln's Vision of Liberty. Entries for this writing competition must be postmarked no later than **February 12, 2009**. You can download and print the competition guidelines at <http://www.sde.state.id.us/site/english/>. If you have questions, please contact Elizabeth Smith, English/Language Arts Coordinator, (208) 332-6903 or EMSmith@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Alternative Authorization requests deadline** -- The Professional Standards Commission Authorization Committee will conduct an approval meeting on December 18, 2008 for Alternative Authorization – Teacher to New Certificate requests. Please submit complete application packets to Cina Oravez, Alternative Authorization Coordinator, prior to that date. If you have questions, please contact Cina Oravez at (208) 332-6936 or CLOravez@sde.idaho.gov. You can mail applications to:
State Department of Education
ATTN: Cina Oravez
PO Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0027
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- **BSU Alumni Legacy Scholarship available** -- The Alumni Legacy Scholarship is a four-year, renewable scholarship available to the relative of a Boise State alumna or alumnus. Scholarship amount is equal to in-state fees during the fall and spring semesters. It was established by the Boise State Alumni Association in 2004 to celebrate family traditions of attending Boise State University. The Alumni Legacy Scholarship encourages a family tradition of attending Boise State University and helps to recruit the best and brightest students. For more information, please visit http://alumni.boisestate.edu/programs/data_forms/alumniScholarshipApplication09.pdf.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS (GO TO TOP)

Office Location
650 West State Street

Telephone
208-332-6800

Speech/Hearing Impaired
1-800-377-3529

Fax
208-334-2228



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This week's highlight in on... Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy

Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy, a public charter high school in Coeur d'Alene, was recognized as one of the best public high schools in America by *U.S. News and World Report*. Coeur d'Alene Charter was the only Idaho high school to make the magazine's annual Top 100 America's Best High Schools list this year. The school ranked No. 97.

"We have many great schools here in Idaho, and I commend *U.S. News and World Report* for recognizing the hard work and achievements of all the teachers, administrators, parents and students at Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy," Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna said.

U.S. News and World Report compiled the rankings after analyzing student achievement results from 21,069 public high schools in 48 states based on 2006-2007 school year data. The methodology looked at overall student performance, how each school met the needs of all students, and the degree to which each school prepared students college-level coursework.

Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy opened in 1999 and serves about 450 students in grades 6-12. According to *U.S. News and World Report*, 65.9 percent of students at Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy take Advanced Placement (AP) exams, and of those, 72.3 percent pass the exams. Earlier this year, the school was highlighted in an award-winning documentary, titled *Flunked*, which examines the public education in the United States and highlights success stories in schools such as Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy.

To learn more about Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy, visit <http://www.cdacharter.org/>. To read the entire 2009 *U.S. News and World Report* America's Best High Schools edition, visit at <http://www.usnews.com/sections/education/high-schools/index.html>.

"What's Happening in Our Schools?" is a feature that appears in each edition of the Weekly E-Newsletter. It is an opportunity for us to share the great things that are happening in Idaho's public schools on a statewide level. If you have something great happening in your school, please e-mail it to Melissa McGrath at MRMcGrath@sde.idaho.gov with "What's Happening in Our Schools" in the subject line.

REMINDERS (GO TO TOP)

- **IDLA now offers service-learning class** -- The Idaho Digital Learning Academy (IDLA) is offering a new Service-Learning class for 1 elective credit starting in January 23, 2009 and going through May 11, 2009. This is a pilot class, and scholarships may be available. At the end of this class, you will have prepared a valuable portfolio of your service-learning experience to show to prospective colleges and assist in receiving college scholarships. For more information, please contact Jeff Simmons, IDLA, at (208) 342-0207 or Cheryl Kary, Learn and Serve Coordinator at the State Department of Education, at (208) 332-6913 or CMKary@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Grants to prevent underage drinking** -- The Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections announced \$140,000 in grants is available to support community-based programs to prevent and reduce underage drinking. Grant proposals are currently being accepted for the Law Enforcement (\$90,000), and the Community Coalition (\$50,000) Mini-Grant Programs. Application and eligibility guidelines and application forms can be downloaded from the IDJC



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website at www.idjc.idaho.gov or can be requested on diskette, email, or hardcopy by calling (208) 334-5100 ext. 413.

- **Teachers of Critical Languages Program** -- American Councils for International Education, which administers the Teachers of Critical Languages Program through the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, has announced that applications to host an exchange teacher in the 2009-2010 school year are available for download at www.tclprogram.org. Applications are welcomed from all K-12 schools in the United States, including secondary and elementary, public or private, and those with critical foreign language programs and those developing them. In all cases, TCLP provides a range of benefits to enable schools to implement their visions for their foreign language programs.
- **Teacher mentoring course** -- Northwest Nazarene University is offering a new course titled "Mentioning New Teachers." Starting in January, the course will be a three-month online mentioning class designed to support new teachers by providing an opportunity for professional growth. For more information, please call (208) 467-8439 or 800-349-6938, or visit www.nnu.edu/continuinigstudiedesd.
- **Winter EduFest** -- Winter EduFest, the conference on gifted and talented education, will be held February 26-28, 2009 at the Coeur d'Alene Resort in Coeur d'Alene. The conference is titled "Keys to Open Potential and Passion." For more information, please visit http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/gifted_talented/announcements.htm.
- **Donations for Homeless Education Programs** -- In an effort to aid homeless education programs in a particularly difficult economy, the State Department of Education is beginning an ongoing project to distribute hotel toiletries collected by Department staff while traveling on business. If your school or district has a need, and you are interested in receiving these toiletries, please contact Camille Wells at CWells@sde.idaho.gov. Requests will be filled in the order they are received. If you have any other questions or concerns about homeless education in Idaho, please feel free to contact Karen Seay at the Department at (208) 332-6978 or KJSeay@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Free youth suicide prevention training** -- Idaho State University is sponsoring free youth suicide prevention trainings. The training session includes warning signs of mental illness in youth, risk and protective factors for suicide and practical information on how to talk to youth who are at risk. Seating is limited, so register early. For more information, contact Marsha Tracy at preventsuicide@isu.edu or (208) 373.1799. The trainings will be held from 8 a.m. to noon on the following dates:
 - January 22, 2009 in Garden City
 - February 3, 2009 in Twin Falls
 - March 3, 2009 in Sandpoint
 - April 8, 2009 in Idaho Falls
- **We Are Family Conference** -- The 2009 We Are Family Conference for Idahoans with disabilities and their families will be held January 13-16, 2009 in Boise. The conference is sponsored by the Idaho State Independent Living Council, Idaho Parents Unlimited and the Idaho Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health. For more information, please visit <http://www.silc.idaho.gov/>.
- **ASVAB** -- The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) program is one way to help students identify a future career path. The ASVAB program is a comprehensive career exploration and planning program



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that includes a multiple-apitude test battery, interest inventory and various career planning tools designed to help the student explore the world of work. The program is free of charge. Please consider using ASVAB in your school or school district. For more information, you can contact: David Hodson, at (208) 334-1450 ext. 213 or david.a.hodson@mepcom.army.mil or Colleen Owen at (208) 334-1450 ext.214 or colleen.owen@mepcom.army.mil. Schools in Northern Idaho, north of New Meadows should call Fred Bernize at (509) 353 3105 ext. 242 or fred.bernize@mepcom.army.mil.

UPCOMING DEADLINES (GO TO TOP)

- **Dec. 12, 2008** -- The deadline to apply for Additional Migrant Funds. To download an application and supporting documents, please visit www.sde.idaho.gov/site/migrant_edu/reports_documents.htm. If you have questions, contact Mary Lou Lopez, Migrant Education Coordinator, at (208)332-6958 or mllopez@sde.idaho.gov.
- **Dec. 12, 2008** -- The deadline to register for the National Geographic Bee. The contest is designed to encourage teachers to include geography in their classrooms, spark student interest in the subject, and increase public awareness about geography. For complete information on the Bee, visit www.nationalgeographic.com/geographicbee.
- **Dec. 15, 2008** -- The deadline to submit assurance pages for those required to submit School Improvement plans this year. All plans must be submitted to the School Improvement office by 5 p.m. Please contact Lisa Kinnaman or Katherine Weatherspoon at (208) 426-4852 with any questions regarding School Improvement plans.
- **Dec. 31, 2008** -- The deadline to submit applications for Northwest Professional Educators \$250 New Classroom Start-Up Grants. Teachers who are new to the profession, their grade level or school district are eligible to apply. See www.nwpe.org for an application.
- **Jan. 12, 2009** -- The deadline to enroll in Northwest Nazarene University's 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games graduate course. The course, titled ED550 Education to Make a Difference, is designed so that educators will learn to teach a series of concise and engaging K-12 lessons about valuing diversity through involvement with the Special Olympics. To register, please visit <https://www.nnu.edu/cereg>. If you have questions, please e-mail Mary Gervase at marymgervase@yahoo.com.
- **Jan. 13, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for the Albert Einstein Distinguished Educator Fellowship, which is a paid fellowship for K-12 math, science, and technology teachers. Einstein Fellows spend a school year in Washington, DC serving in a federal agency or on Capitol Hill. Visit www.trianglecoalition.org/ein.htm to learn more or to apply online.
- **Jan. 15, 2009** -- The deadline for current high school seniors to complete online scholarship applications. Applications are available at www.boardofed.idaho.gov/scholarships. The State of Idaho, through the Office of the State Board of Education, provides online applications for the following scholarships: Governor's Cup Scholarship Academic, Governor's Cup Scholarship Professional-Technical, Robert R. Lee Promise "A" Academic, Robert R. Lee Promise "A" Professional-Technical, Robert C. Byrd Scholarship, Tschudy Family Scholarship (Emmett High School graduates only).



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- **Jan. 20, 2008** -- The deadline for students to enter the C-SPAN "StudentCam" national video documentary competition, which is open to middle school and high school students (grades 6-12). This year C-SPAN asks students to create a 5- to 8-minute video documentary that addresses an issue of national significance. For more information, please visit www.studentcam.org. If you have any questions, e-mail emartin@c-span.org or call (800) 523-7586.
- **Jan. 23, 2009** -- The deadline for students to enter the Reconnecting the Circle's National High School Essay Contest. This year's essay question asks, "Why is it important to understand patriotism in Indian Country?" and prompts students to research Native American patriots, as well as explore their own American communities. All high-school aged students (grades 9-12) from tribal, BIE, public, private, and parochial schools from all 50 states are invited to participate. To learn more, visit <http://www.reconnectingthecircle.com>.
- **Jan. 30, 2009** -- The Idaho Dropout Summit has been scheduled at the Nampa Civic Center in Nampa. More details to come.
- **Jan. 30, 2009** -- The deadline to submit an application for 21st Century Community Learning Centers grants. Letters must be submitted to Matt McCarter, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Coordinator, at 4 p.m. (MST). If you have questions, please call (208) 332-6960.
- **Feb. 1, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for the Frances Crawford Marvin American Indian Scholarship. A candidate for this scholarship must be enrolled full-time at a two-year or four-year college/university and must be Native American. Proof of American Indian blood is required by letter or proof papers. Students must demonstrate financial need, academic achievement, and have a 3.0 GPA or higher.
- **Feb. 9, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation's Christopher Columbus Awards program. The awards program is a national, community-based science and technology program for 6th-8th grade students. It challenges students to work in teams of three or four, with an adult coach, to identify a problem in their community and apply scientific method to create an innovative solution to that problem. For more information, please visit www.christophercolumbusawards.com.
- **March 12, 2009** -- The deadline to apply for the Horace Mann Scholarship Program for Educators, which offers scholarships for educators in public and private schools to take college courses. Please visit <https://www.horacemann.com/resources/scholarships/default.aspx> for more information.
- **March 15, 2009** -- The deadline for students to enter the Siemens We Can Change the World Challenge. Middle school student teams from across the country will be challenged to create sustainable, reproducible environmental improvements in their local communities. Visit <http://www.wecanchange.com> to learn more.